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## Saguaro National Park News Release

*For Immediate Release*

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### Spud Cabin Fire Update

This morning four firefighters from Saguaro National Park and the Coronado National Forest were flown by helicopter to the Spud Cabin Fire to suppress the fire. Fire behavior during the day was creeping and smoldering. Firefighters used Minimum Impact Suppression (MIST) Tactics, a "light hand on the land" approach to minimize impacts to Park resources. As of 6pm on Thursday, July 12th, the Spud Cabin Fire is 4.8 acres and is 100% contained. The general area of the fire received some precipitation on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Firefighters will continue mop-up efforts tomorrow and will re-evaluate conditions mid-day on Friday.

As previously reported, the fire was ignited by lightning on the evening of Tuesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. The Spud Cabin Fire is located in the Rincon Mountains, approximately ¼ mile northwest of Spud Rock Camp, around the 8,000 foot elevation level. It is burning in open park-like ponderosa pine. The fire is located in an area that has burned numerous times in recent history, leading to reduced fuel loads. The fire is located in the vicinity of the Spud Rock Camp and the Turkey Creek Trail; however, no closures have been implemented at this time. Values to be protected include Mexican Spotted Owl habitat.

Small-scale natural fires, such as the Spud Cabin Fire, can benefit owl habitat by reducing fuel loads, creating small openings and thinning stands that increase habitat diversity. Small-scale fires also reduce the risk of large crown fires that may decrease or eliminate habitat for nesting, roosting, and foraging. In addition, small-scale natural fires create snags, canopy gaps, large logs, and perpetuate understory shrubs, grasses, and forbs that are important habitat components for the owl, its prey, and other wildlife.

This incident demonstrates that although the area is beginning to receive monsoon moisture, conditions are such that fuels may still be receptive to ignition sources. Park officials remind visitors that fire restrictions remain in place. For additional information and fire updates, call the Park's fire information hotline at (520) 733-5150 or visit [www.nps.gov/sagu](http://www.nps.gov/sagu).

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